

Poetic world of Lesya Ukrainka
(translated by Igor Marinovsky)

Mysterious night! I obey you

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Go away dark sad thoughts.
I do not compete. I do not fight.
I am sinking in the silver sleep.

People are slumbering. Human woe slumbers.
It is quiet everywhere and quietude is in the
heart.

Maybe, is sorrow dead or does it nap in the
depth?

Will it wake up again?
But I do not care. Until the eye is bright
We will have no sad talks.

Look how silver wave is glistening.
Look how sky is turning blue in the height.
Wave attracts me to the sea.
The beam of bright star is calling.

I would like to be song

I would like to be song
in order to fly freely around the world,
to be be spread in the echo of wind,
to move over the bright stars,
to live in sonorous song
and prosper in the flexible sea.

And perhaps, will it happen the second miracle
of gospel?

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of gospel?

I will come like Magdalen
in order to pay you last tribute.

And in that minute as in the grief
I will weep bitterly that you were lost for me
Suddenly I will see that you were ressurected
and shone in glory of new life and new hope.

And I will weep absentmindedly on knees
and stretch my hands to you
and call you on your name... And you?
What would you say then? Would you send
me to proclaim the Good News

to your forgetful and secret friends
that disowned you for three times?

In the excitement of happiness
I would spread lovely story among people.
And you will go to the New country of glory
in order to build paradise on the Earth
for you and for the chosen.

Come, come to the mountains

Come, come to the mountains.

There my sisters,
mountain maidens, free flying spirits
will dance on the grass in the circles
like lightnings.

We will find fern flower for you
and pluck star from the sky.

On the mountain snow we will
whiten enchanted veil.

In order to gain forest crown
we will throw Snake-queen from the throne
and flinty mountains will be our strongholds.

Be my beloved!

In the evening and in the morning

I will bring you colorful robes
and weave a little wreath.

I will dance with you
and bear you on the wings
to the scarlet seas, in the place where sun
hides gold in the secret depth.

Then we will look to the star in the window.
The star-spinner will give us silver fibers.

We will sew silver shadow.

Then on the dawn when white clouds
will stand on the brink of heavens
like bright flocks that drink cold water
from the quiet river
we will find the lovely rest.

From the drama "Forest song"

About giant

It was long ago in the lovely childish age
in the distant native land.

I heard this fairy-tale. I heard it only for one time

and it is in my memory till the Present time.

It was told me
by little village boy
without reactionary aims
because he was a kid.

He told me
in holy simplicity.
(Perhaps I made mistake
that put it in poetic form)

We sat with him in the garden
in the evening
in the time when sunset put flame
behind the mountains.

The evening wind visited
our old pear
and something secret and horrible
looked into the soul.

Everything made us afraid:
grass that quietly rustled

and the distant wall of garden
that was burning in the sunset.

But the most terrible for us
were poplars of the pond
who stood in the rows
because of some evil will.

Everything, told me Lavrin,
(it was the name of my friend)
grew on the giant
who competed with god.

This giant was strong
in the body and spirit.
He was able to tear
chains and shackles.

No power of enemies
could overcome him.
But he was reached
by divine punishment.

How giant angered god
that Laurin did not know.

I asked the elders
but nobody told me.

The Lord did not shot
the giant with his lightning
but only covered him with sleep
like with soft fleece.

It is said that sleep is divine
but sometimes it is gods punishment.
The giant had bad adventure in the sleep.

The giant thought:
he would sleep only for an hour..
But he is sleeping yet all century
and dreams about monsters.

The foes abused his sleep.
They drank his blood
and broke his white bones.

They put iron wires in his body
and touched his deep wounds
with their hungry mouths .

For many times
hands of predators
got to the depth of his heart.
But giant continues to sleep
though he suffers big afflictions.

Sometimes in the sleep
the giant painfully wrinkles his brow,
then groves, forests and oakeries
make noise.

When giant feels unworldly pain
he sometimes moves a little.

Spasms run on his body
and the Earth quakes.

But his enemies are not afraid.
They guess :"It is only apparition".
But divine anger will be stopped
and divine punishment will pass away.

And giant will stand up from the ground.
He will rise up his mighty hands.
and all iron wires will be torn from his body.

Everything that glued to him
will disappear."

The boy stopped to talk.
We both were full of fear.

"When will he stand up?"
I asked the little boy.

"Perhaps, next year, next century
next eternity or in this moment."

The whirlwind came
and trees trembled.
We went to the house
like frightened little birds.

Lovely land of mine,
distant native country.
Every time I remember you
I remember this fairy-tale.

Star of poetry

Through evil mists, through great sadness

you shone for me, my star.

You became flame in the midnight.

You made bright path through dark raving sea
and enchanted these eyes by new hope.

You belong to me, my star.

Who are you, dream or ghost? I do not know.
Only I believe in you. I would never break my
faith.

When my faith will be broken I will be broken
too.

You woke me up to the life.

You opened my eyes.

Suddenly wings grew in my body
and I flew to the height of sparkling way.

Prophet

I said to the Spirit in my heart:
"Why do you wake me up in the midnight?

Why do you open this gentle mouth
and put on my tongue prophetic speeches?
This people are sleepy. They have stagnant
hearts.

This nation is not liberty-fighter.

My spirit said to me:
"Stand up watcher, without doubts to your job.
Though this callous humans in the native land,
would not listen to your talks.

But glory will thunder to the stars
that there was a prophet among them.

Do not sing for me this song!

Do not sing for me this song!
Do not hurt my heart with grief!
My sorrow naps in my heart.
Why do you wake him by your singing?

You do not know what I think
when I sit speechless and pale.
In that time in the depth in my heart
this sad song is weeping.

Let their be darkness

"Let their be darkness" said our earthly god
and it became dark and chaos larded.
like before creation of the world. No, it was
worse.

Living creatures who lived in the chaos.
were oppressed by darkness.
Everywhere appeared ghosts...
Unworldly horror froze all souls.

And the most courageous ones were full of fear.
Hungry cries and groans emerged
from great and dark mob
as if from the bottom of sea.

It seems that this mob was part of chaos
and its voice. Sometimes there were shouts
in the darkness "Light! Light"
And it was heard response
of earthly god "Let their be darkness"
And chaos trembled.

People said to the prophet

You cursed us with heavy curse
for cruelty, obstinacy and treason.
You judged us, you condemned us.

and never called us to the divine counsel.

Your tongue was scorpion for us.
You tormented us and stung us constantly.
And now you stand against us
like guilelessly offended one.

And now it seems to you
that nobody suffered so much in the world
as you for your over-wise teaching,

Oh, what prophet, you are,
that your esoteric eye
does not see
even your own woe completely.

You are complaining and self-pitying.
You are the only immortal in this confusion.
because your spirit will live eternally
together with curses and disdain.

We can beat you
and stone you.
But the more we punish you
the greater is your "glorious tomb".

You are sparkling like flying star.
But it is enough for your immortality.

We are like the Milky Way
have to shine slowly for a long time.

The dark night is waiting for everyone of us
like enemy in the hiding place.

Her cold hands of heavy forgetfulness
are reaching for us from the space of ages.

Every stone hurts our feet on the way
and we do not have leader
on the road of truth.

Our heart became callous
like plants in the rainy season.

You curse us for this,
curse your brothers of spirit.

Do you think, you are the only one
who said "I have words of the Most High".
A lot of liars said "I am from god"
Who is the most sincere?

Deeds do not show quickly
insincerity of words.

How can we learn immediately
your soul through your talking
without seeing your deeds.

Oh, if we were able to see
with our own eyes that god
of your preachings.

Our way would become straight like arrow.

Oh, if God could give us
the light of his wisdom from his shining.
You would not throw curses on us
and we would not stone you.

Oh will you be glad because of
our enlightenment by truth?
But perhaps you want to perish
like outcast prophet in the wilderness.

Imagination

Imagination! You are magical power

that built our world in emptiness of space.

You feelings feelings in the beams of star.

You woke up the dead from the eternal dream.

You gave the aim to the turbulent wave of sea.

I meet you in my sadness.

Please, tell me weird imagination,
where can one find help in the immense human
woe.

How to build new world from the old.

How to wake up the sleepy mind.

How to turn back time that passed away in vain.

How to show the aim of life to disappointed
people.

Imagination, give your counsel, how to live
without happiness.

The earth! The earth

The strange land, you are so native for me!

Mother-Earth, save your poor child!

The sea betrayed me. It payed for the love by
sneer.

Do you hear? Sea-gulls enjoy evil jest.

What do I see? You suffered also from betrayal.
Magnificent land of Byzantine is like widow in
the simple robe,
grieves sadly in the hard coverings of snows
because her beloved sun loves rival-cloud...
Mother-earth, rejoice! Even if your treacherous
friend
is seduced for a while. Your children are
remaining with you.
Calamity, betrayal and woe make them close to
you.

And when the cup is full. They return in your
bosom.
Human mother has no such happiness.
You are the happiest! The earth, rejoice and
bloom!

Songs from the cemetery

I lied on the cemetery.
The quietude of tombs sang around me.
The quietude of tombs sang; "Sleep!
Happiness is a dream"

To sleep? Oh, baby sleeps in the cradle
The deceased sleeps in the tomb.
But do the eternal who lie in the tomb
really sleep?

On the cemetery we spoke about happiness
and our words fell and covered the soul
as if the fallen bloom, these sincere words.

And sadly the grass rocked.
It seems that all old tombs
understood our words.

The cry of autumn, autumnal song

The cry of autumn, autumnal song
among the gold summer
was heard victoriously
from my heart.

Oh, It is happened because
in the autumnal sad misty dawn
I untimely sang hymn of Spring.

The gold thorns did not disappear

The gold thorns did not disappear.
They became only blackened.
The bloody flowers did not dry out.
They only withered.

Come, the sun to my window.
and shine bright.
Golden my blackened thorns.
May everything be fine.

Burn, burn, my heart.
Be constantly on fire.
When I bear bloody flowers.
May it be not in vain.

Behind the mountain there are lightnings

Behind the mountain there are lightnings.
But in our valley it is dark.
In the haven black waters

are mysteriously splashing.

The lightning is flying in the sky
and sinks in the haven.

The morbid waters hide
the brightness in the black tomb.

The black-watered haven will be subject
to light when bright-eyed storm will
conquer all sky,

when lightning will cut waters
with silver swords
and look at the bottom with the speedy eyes.

And then on the light
the haven will respond by light
when the high lightning would become queen
of
water abyss.